

CLONING, SEQUENCING AND CHARACTERIZATION  
OF TWO CELL DEATH GENES AND USES THEREFOR  
Abstract of the Disclosure

Described herein are genes shown to be essential  
5 for programmed cell death in *C. elegans*, their encoded  
products (RNA and polypeptides), antibodies directed  
against the encoded polypeptides; probes for  
identifying structurally related genes and bioassays  
for identifying functionally related cell death genes  
10 from various organisms; methods and agents for altering  
(increasing or decreasing) the activity of the cell  
death genes and, thus, of altering cell death; and uses  
therefor. Specifically, two genes shown to be  
essential for almost all of the cell deaths which occur  
15 in the development of *C. elegans*, referred to as *ced-3*  
and *ced-4*, have been cloned, sequenced and  
characterized.

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